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CENTER SCENE

The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter *July 1988*

EDUCATION AWARDS

Bottom Row: Lucinda Halbert, Margret Mech, Sheryald Johnson
Top Row: Cynthia Liebe, Laura Nelson, Marlene Brooke

Congratulations to the six winners of this year's Education Awards. Each year the Service Center invites interested employees to apply for an education award in the amount of $600. A panel of SC employees reviews the applications and recommends up to six candidates and two alternates to the SC Director.

This year interest was high in the data processing field. Five of the selectees have career aspirations in this area.

Laura Nelson, Computer Assistant, will use her award to study computer programming. Her goal is a career in applications programming.

Margaret Mech, Division Secretary, would eventually like to get into the management area. Her award is going toward a degree in business management.

Cynthia Liebe, working as a computer assistant, wants to enhance her computer skills. Her short-range goal is to be a computer programmer, leading up to a position as a senior program analyst or systems analyst.

Voucher Examiner Lucinda Halbert will use her award to pursue her goals as a computer assistant, and later, as a computer programmer.

Marlene Brooke, Editorial Assistant, envisions a future as a computer support specialist/administrator, and later, as a computer systems manager.

Sheri Johnson, Supply Clerk, also has an interest in computers. For now, she desires more knowledge in the operation and logic areas of computers. She would ultimately like to pursue her interests in the computer field in the area of communications.

Upcoming Events

General Management Evaluation
July 18-22,
Executive Conference Room

Multicultural Day Picnic,
Bicentennial Park, August 3, Exhibits;
August 2-3, Exec. Conference Room

Women's Equality Day Career Workshop, August 25, West/Center

Hispanic Heritage Week Observance
September 15-16, West/Center

FLEXITIME

Labor-management negotiations on the issue of flexible work schedules began and ended on June 20, 1988. As of June 23, 1988, the union had planned to file an unfair labor practice charge with the Federal Labor Relations Authority (the process could take at least 2 months to be resolved).

Local 1945 of the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) grieved to the Federal Service Impasses Panel when the Bureau refused to consider a flexible work schedule proposal by the union. On December 29, 1987, the panel directed both parties to negotiate over the issue.

According to a spokesperson for the union, negotiations broke off when management insisted on reopening negotiations on the entire labor-management contract rather than just the flexitime issue. Management declined comment.

By Bill Griffith

PICNIC

The first annual SC picnic will be held on Friday, July 29, 1988, in Bicentennial Park just south of building 40.

Tentative plans are for a family-type picnic, with games for children and an interdivisional volleyball tournament for adults. Food and beverages will be bought and prepared by an employee committee, with a cost of $5 per person or $10 per family.

Arrangements are being handled by a committee composed of: Cathy Davis, Peter Doran, and Bill Griffith; D-100; Louise Trieste, D-150; Patty Moler, D-220; Dona Beatty, D-250; Nathan Matthews and Bonnie Stewart, D-430; Jeff Jung, D-470; Sandra Tokarczyk, D-510; Barbara Guest, D-530; Gwen Moore, Lee Krebs, and Margo Surovik-Bohnert, D-550; and Jack Dugwyler, WO staff.

AUTOMATED LIBRARY

For a number of years the BLM Library, located at the Service Center, has been one of the most highly automated services in the Bureau, offering computerized literature searches and using a nationwide cataloging utility, OCLC, to produce its catalog cards. Now the library has taken the next step in this process of automation with the installation of its new online catalog. This is a fully automated version of the library's card catalog that provides both the traditional "author, title, subject" access and full keyword access to any word in the title or subject fields.

Access is currently available only through a single microcomputer located in the Technical Services Department of the library. However, this limited access is only a temporary situation. Plans are underway to add a Local Area Network (LAN) to the system, with public access terminals to be located in the main library and dial-up access to be available for the field. Depending upon fund availability, the expansion will be phased in over the final months of FY88 and the early part of FY89. When more generalized access is available, it will be announced through an information bulletin to all Bureau employees.

BLM is the first Denver federal library to fully automate its entire collection. This exciting development is the result of 3 years spent planning, evaluating various software vendors, working to get copies of all the automated records created on OCLC since 1975, converting data from tape to floppy disk, and tying together the existing pieces of hardware to make efficient use of equipment the library already owns. It is particularly exciting because the entire catalog will be available through this system.

Users will find the system very friendly since it is entirely menu-driven. By reading the directions given on each screen, the user can locate any records he or she may need. Demonstrations will be given at the Service Center on request while the staff waits for installation of the public access terminals and the Local Area Network. After that installation, an open house and reception will be scheduled to welcome users to the new catalog. Since this catalog will eliminate the need to file thousands of cards each year in the catalog, the staff will be celebrating as well! When the system is fully operational, the old card catalog will be retired to a back room for backup purposes only.

Sandy Bowers

Since some work is being done to upgrade the software, the system is not always available to end users at this time.

To schedule a demonstration of the new system and its capabilities, contact Sandy Bowers, Bureau Librarian at 236-6646 (FTS 776-6646).

IAMS

If hot and dry conditions persist throughout the West in 1988, the fire season could be even more devasting than it was in 1987. Burning conditions in the eastern portion of Montana are already similar to a typical August. Fortunately, BLM districts can now get the a good idea of the extent of the wildfire threat through the use of remote terminals linked to a BIFC computer. This computerized network can serve as an effective tool for the dispatch of personnel and equipment for initial fire attack.

In an effort to increase efficiency and reduce costs for initial attack, special Congressional appropriations provided BLM funds to develop the Initial Attack Management System (IAMS). IAMS consists of Automatic Lightning Detection System (ALDS), Remote Automatic Weather Stations (RAWS), fire fuels/terrain, and other data bases. Information from the data bases and the fire dispatcher's personal knowledge can be input into the BEHAVE model, resulting in predictions of fire spread rate, containment time, spotting distance, and other important information.

Strategically positioned throughout the western U.S. are ALDS sensors that detect cloud-to-ground lightning strikes. The location of a lightning strike can be plotted by a BIFC position analyzer within 1 mile if at least two ALDS sensors record it.

Important weather data such as temperature, total precipitation, and wind speed are recorded hourly by RAW stations, transmitted to a stationary meterological satellite, and then telemetered every 3 hours to a receiving antenna at BIFC. The primary network of RAW stations are soon to be on a grid spaced 75 miles apart on BLM land.

The third major component of IAMS is the fire fuels/terrain data base. Since 1984 the Branch of Remote Sensing (D-473) in the SC Division of Resources has been charged with the responsibility for completing the mapping of fire fuels for the 10 western states by 1988. This includes both BLM and non-BLM land for each state. Considering the immense size of the western U.S., this has been a monumental task. Presently, only two states, Arizona and New Mexico, have not been input into the BIFC fire fuels data base.

Fire fuels are mapped by processing digital data based on reflected light intensities recorded by sensors on a satellite orbiting approximately 529 miles above the earth. The data from five to eight days throughout a state's growing season are registered to each other and then registered to a latitude and longitude grid. Before fire personnel from each district come to a SC workshop, the signals from nonwoody plants are enhanced and similar reflectance values are grouped. District fire personnel then identify or label the pixel groups into fire fuel classes. After each workshop, District fire personnel are sent hard copy fire fuel maps to review and correct as necessary.

Lee Werth, with a lot of excellent cooperation from Ed Chine, a TGS, Technology contractor, BLM Districts, and BIFC, has been planning, coordinating, and directing the fire fuels mapping effort.

Lee graduated from Montana University and received his Ph.D. in Forestry from the University of Minnesota. Before coming to BLM he worked at the Johnson Space Center in digital image processing. He lives in Ft. Collins with his wife and two children.